



# WEEKLY NEWS LETTER

THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL OF THE A. F. OF L., BY INSTRUCTION OF ITS CONVENTION, DIRECTED THE OFFICERS AT HEADQUARTERS TO FURNISH A WEEKLY NEWS LETTER, FREE OF COST, TO ALL OFFICIAL LABOR PUBLICATIONS.

Containing a brief summary of important matters, affecting labor, occurring in the industrial, legislative and judicial fields, and such other information that will further the development and progress of the trade union movement.

No. 20.

AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR  
HEADQUARTERS

801-809 G ST. N. W., WASHINGTON, D. C.  
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## TRUSTS AND CONVICT LABOR

All of the Industrial Combinations Make Use of Convict Labor Wherever It Is Obtainable.

Washington, Aug. 19.--It is interesting to note that the great trusts make use of convict labor and hold contracts for the labor of prisoners wherever it is possible to obtain them.

The United States Steel Co., (the steel trust) has contracts for the labor of Alabama convicts in the mines and foundries of the Tennessee Coal and Iron Co.

The Ford-Johnson Co. (the chair trust) has convicts in six penitentiaries and county jails.

The Reliance Sterling Manufacturing Co., known as the prison labor trust, is the largest convict working corporation in the United States. It has contracts for the labor of convicts in twelve penal institutions throughout the entire country. Until Jan. 1 of this year, it also had the production of the penitentiary of Joliet, Ill., and another penal institution at Pontiac, Ill.

The American Fork & Hoe Co. (the farmers' tool trust) has contracts in penal institutions of Iowa and Michigan.

The Brownell Brush & Wire Goods Co. holds the control in the American market in bristles and tampico, and has contracts in a number of penal institutions in Ohio, Maryland and New Jersey.

Jos. Wild & Co. (the linoleum trust) has contracts in the penal institutions of New Jersey and other places.

The Naval Stores Trust leases all the state convicts in Florida.

## BETTER PAY FOR OFFICERS

London, Aug. 19.--The managers of the White Star Line have revised their rates of pay to officers and in the future no junior officer will get less than \$500 per annum. The managers of the American and Dominion lines have also revised the schedules for their officers, by which an improvement will be made.

Carpenters of Portsmouth, N. H., secured increase ranging from 25¢ to 50¢ per day.

The City Council of East Liverpool, O. increased the wages of street laborers from \$1.75 to \$2.00 per day.

## DOCKERS' GREAT VICTORY

Trade Unionism Receives a Mighty Impetus in the Great Uprising of the Seamen and Dockers.

Washington, Aug. 19.—The cheering news which reached this country from London to the effect that the dockers had been successful in their great contest is an added laurel to former victories of the trade union. The mighty force of unity of action has again asserted itself and while there may be individual criticism and some contention, yet on the whole the great body of the seamen and the dockers have taken an advanced step from which there will be no retreat. The tremendous cost of the stoppage runs into the millions, but this great waste became an absolute necessity in order that the argument of the seamen and dockers might be strengthened to the point where relief was forthcoming. This struggle is an epoch in the great world of workers, and will give courage and confidence to the unorganized, and added strength to those who were principal combatants, as well as their trade union sympathizers.

## SLEUTHS VS. DETECTIVES.

Detroit, Aug. 19.—Frank J. Cook and Dan Vreeland, special officers of the Lake Shore railroad, were killed by a Michigan Central Detective, so it is alleged. These gentry are apparently always looking for blood, and if no other occupation is at hand, according to this story, they war on themselves. It is truly unfortunate that their efforts could not be confined to the lines of the present occurrence.

## PURSuing OLD TACTICS

Washington, Aug. 19.—In a letter from W. E. Bryan, general president of the United Brotherhood of Leather Workers on Horse Goods, it is stated that the I. W. W., the alleged labor organization, have sent out a pamphlet addressed to the membership of the Leatherworkers, in an effort to split the organization. The leatherworkers have been conducting a hard fight to reduce their hours and increase their pay, and as is usually the result they have been compelled to combat a strong manufacturers' association. The attack of the "Wonderworkers" is in accord with the policy of that combination. Wherever a strike is in progress there you find detectives and the I. W. W., for they apparently have a common cause. The I. W. W. representatives in the Philadelphia and Eddystone strike of the Baldwin Locomotive Works employes confined their arguments to socialism, industrial unionism and an attack upon the national unions, while trying to split the organizations on strike.

## ELECTRICAL WORKERS SEATED

Springfield, Mass., Aug. 19.—The Central body of this city after having excluded both organizations of Electrical Workers, thereby taking a neutral stand in the controversy on between the regular and unrecognized factions, has reconsidered its action and seated the organization recognized by the American Federation of Labor.

At Bakersfield, Cal. painters increased wages from \$4.00 to \$4.50 per day.

## A GREAT VICTORY

Washington, Aug. 19.—By a decision rendered by Comptroller Tracewell the working hours of workmen employed by private ship building companies in constructing government vessels, has been reduced to eight hours per day. An amendment to the last civil appropriation bill required that certain vessels to be built by private companies were to be constructed on the eight hour day. This decision incorporates all of the government work being done by private companies. This decision by Comptroller Tracewell is in effect comparable to the old saw, "Coming events cast their shadows before them". The eight-hour bill introduced this session of Congress by Representative Hughes has been agreed to by the Labor Committee with slight amendments, and the committee has authorized the chairman of the committee to report out the bill so that it may be placed upon the calendar before the adjournment of the special session.

## "PEACE WITH PRICE"

Washington, Aug. 19.—The National Labor Journal, published under the auspices of the District Assembly numbered 66, Order of Knights of Labor of America, is promulgating a scheme termed "Industrial Peace Proclamation." One page of the paper is devoted to a short heading, then the balance of the page taken up with photograph signatures of members of Congress and others subscribing to its Industrial Peace proposition. It is understood that this publication is soliciting signatures and that in some instances at least, it is alleged, money is asked for the privilege of signing. It appears to be rather a singular situation, when men are asked to contribute for signing a document declaring for industrial peace.

## "BILL" MAHON, POET

Washington, Aug. 19.—"Bill" Mahon, President of the Amalgamated Association of Street Car Men, has developed into a real poet. In the August Federationist there was printed a poem by him, entitled "Not Understood". A large number of papers have picked it up and are re-printing it.

## SWISS TRANSPORTATION MEN

Berlin, Aug. 19.—The Society of Swiss Railway and Steamship Servants have been conducting a most active organization campaign during the past year, with splendid results. This society had at the close of the past year, 106 groups, with over 13,000 members, and consists of 16 grade societies. A hard fight was encountered in an effort for a new wage law, but the society was successful in securing the results sought.

## GET GOOD INCREASE

Berlin, Aug. 19.—The servants of the tramway in Budweis were organized in the Austrian Transport Workers' Union, consisting of engineers, firemen, coal men, locksmiths, carriage work washers and track-watchmen and cleaners, and have secured a splendid increase in wages.

Brewery drivers secured increase of \$2. per week at Troy, N. Y.

## HELD TO GRAND JURY

Minneapolis, Minn., Aug. 19.—The proprietor of the Profit Sharing Laundry has been charged with employing a girl of 13 years of age to work on a portion of the machinery designated as the mangle. He was arrested on complaint of Chas. S. Albright, Deputy State Labor Commissioner, who went to the laundry on July 26 and found a girl of 13 working on a mangle machine. The Minnesota child labor law prohibits any girl under 15 years of age from working on this machinery. The laundry proprietor, on appearing in court, admitted the facts, but claimed the machinery was not dangerous. This pleading failed to gain a dismissal of the two cases filed against him, the contentions being overruled and the defendant held to the grand jury. The extreme penalty is one year in jail.

## PROBABLE MARBLE STRIKE

New York, Aug. 19.—Members of the Executive Board of the National Association of Marble Dealers of the United States have under consideration the matter of making a national affair of the present strike in the marble trades, which is expected to extend. The national association controls the marble industry of every city in America, with the exception of New York. It is stated that the places of the marble polishers are being filled with strike breakers with a view to establishing the open shop.

## METAL STRIKE IN DRESDEN

Dresden, Aug. 19.—A strike of German metal workers has broken out and the employers have locked out 60 per cent of the union men.

## GENERAL STRIKE IN CADIZ

Cadiz, Spain, Aug. 19.—A general strike has been declared here and the greater portion of the shops and factories has been closed.

## BRIEF STRIKE WINS

New York, Aug. 19.—A brief strike of the firemen and sailors of the Steamship "Lily", of the United Fruit Company, occurred a few days ago, the strikers demanding the scale adopted by the Sailors and Firemen's Union of Great Britain. The firemen had been receiving \$30.00 and the sailors \$25.00, and they demanded \$35.00 and \$30.00 respectively. The men had been on strike for about 10 minutes when a conference was held resulting in the granting of the demands, and the strike declared off.

## APPLY FOR REAFFILIATION

Terre Haute, Ind., Aug. 19.—Some time ago the charter of the Central body of Terre Haute was revoked as it decided to keep the unrecognized Electrical Workers in affiliation. The body has since reconsidered its action and applied for a charter of reaffiliation, which has been granted.

Plumbers at Guelph, Ont., increased wage scale from 27 to 30 cents per hour without strike.

## SECESSION MOVEMENT

Milwaukee, Aug. 19.—A small number of musicians in Milwaukee have formed a dual union outside the jurisdiction of the American Federation of Musicians. The usual reason has been advanced by the seceders, that is, the regular organization "was not run right".

## A GOOD CHARTER

Pueblo, Colo., Aug. 19.—A new charter has been drafted for the city by the charter convention, which has just closed its labors. There has been enacted a provision for the eight-hour day on all city work and the policemen also are to get an eight-hour day, there being provided the three-shift system.

## BALDWIN STRIKERS O. K.

Philadelphia, Aug. 19.—The strikers at the Baldwin Locomotive Works in this city and Eddystone are still out and making a magnificent fight. Rumor has it that a conference will soon be held with the officials of the company and the representatives of the various organizations involved. Thus far it has been a remarkable contest. Notwithstanding various influences at work to divide the men, they are still standing solid.

## A FAVORABLE INTERPRETATION

Fitchburg, Mass., Aug. 19.—Attorney James M. Swift has given his opinion on the 54-Hour Law just passed by the Massachusetts Legislature, and which goes into effect the 1st of January next year. He avers that it is unlawful to cause employees to work nearly eleven hours the first five days of the week, in order to give them the whole day off on Saturday. If such a schedule is in effect anywhere when the law goes into effect, the state police will put a stop to it. The Attorney-General proposes, according to his opinion, to enforce the statute to the letter.

## ENFORCING THE LAW

Chattanooga, Tenn., Aug. 19.—The State Factory Inspector asserts that children under fourteen years of age will not be allowed to work in this city. Nearly 200 have been stopped from work within a short time. Inspections have not as yet been completed and it is thought that before they are, many more children now employed will be set free.

## LAUNDRY GIRLS WIN STRIKE

Sheridan, Wyo., Aug. 19.—Both of the laundries in this city were closed down a few days ago by a strike of the laundry workers' union. The controversy has been settled, however, and the girls have returned to work with an increase in wages.

At Morristown, N. J., after a prolonged struggle against the open shop in the building trades, forty contractors are employing union men exclusively, the 44-hour week and Saturday half-holiday being practically established.

## RE-CALL FOR FEDERAL JUDGES

Right of Supreme Court to: Question the Constitutionality of any Law  
Enacted by Congress is Denied.

Washington, Aug. 19.—Senator Owen, of Oklahoma, made a speech in the Senate some days ago, which is enlivening and instructive and indicates the present trend of opinion relative to the Judiciary. "The right of re-call of judges is all the more important", asserted Senator Owen, "when we recognize the fact that the big interests of this country have taken infinite pains to bring about the nominations and promotion as federal judges of those whose opinions are known to be favorable to their point of view. It has always been a habit of kings and potentates to surround themselves with pomp and ceremony to impress the mass of men with their sacred function. They have always claimed to receive their right to rule from God himself and to rule by divine right. The judge in ancient times wore a huge horsehair wig, silken gown and ermine. It impressed the people with the enormous dignity of the individuals so attired. It raised the presumption of his infallibility; it excited the reverence of men, and so those who have found their shelter behind a judicial oligarchy have impressed tremendously on the people of this country the idea of judicial infallibility. We are taught that we should reverence the courts; that we should not question their judgments, and when the supreme court of the United States has spoken, it should no more be questioned than we should question the word of God. The Supreme Court has sought, without constitutional warrant, to declare acts of Congress unconstitutional. The constitution is one of the delegated powers and it does not delegate the right to declare statutes unconstitutional."

## HOLDING TWO JOBS

Washington, Aug. 19.—A letter from the secretary-treasurer of the Federation of Railway Employees of Denver, Colo., states, among other things, that there is now a strike on by the Machinists' Union against the Rock Drill & Machinery Co., and that one Carl Bell, an employe of one of the departments of the Denver mint, during a similar strike, about a year ago, obtained permission of the foreman to act as watchman during some hours of the night and still to work at the mint during the day time, and that he is now using his vacation in working for this drill company. It is a rather singular state of affairs that the Government should provide for a vacation for its employes and then countenance those employes to become strike breakers. The general inference has always been that when a vacation was given, it was done for the purpose of permitting employes to recuperate. The matter has been taken up with Franklin McVeagh, Secretary of the Treasury.

## THE DENMARK WAY

London, Aug. 19.—The Court of City Right in Copenhagen has pronounced two warrants, whereby two trade unions in that city are compelled to readmit expelled members on pain of heavy fine. Compulsion of this sort will lead to further complications.

Two union men have recently been elected to city offices at Santa Cruz, Cal.

Washington, Aug. 19.—The Government Consul from New Zealand, in making his last report states that the greatest difficulty in connection with the sheep industry of New Zealand is the scarcity of labor. He states that the pastoralists complain that the wages are too high and that even at the current rate it is difficult to obtain labor. It is claimed that the scarcity of labor is of especial draw back in districts where cultivation of the soil is required in connection with sheep raising.

#### MONAMARA BUTTONS AND STAMPS

Washington, Aug. 19.—The orders for McNamara buttons and stamps have exceeded expectations. There is being shipped every day a large number of both. The orders for both the buttons and stamps have had to be duplicated. It is apparent that the trade unionists are gradually awakening to the fact that it is necessary for a vigorous campaign to raise sufficient money to defray legitimate expenses of the trial.

#### AN AFRICAN PUBLICATION

London, Aug. 19.—The Amalgamated Society of Railway and Harbor Servants of South Africa have established an official journal entitled "South African Railway Servants Review". The first number contains information upon the conditions of the railway men in Jermiston, Kroonstad, Ladysmith, Mafeking and Pretoria. These are all names which are connected with bloody letters in the history of recent events, but which now form the center of a progressive trade union.

#### EMPLOYMENT OF FOREIGN WOMEN

Paris, Aug. 19.—Statistics relative to women employed by the state in France reveal the fact that the post and telegraph department employ 18,678 women and the state railways 6,356. The state only owns a small portion of the great lines. Of the 6,356 women, 5315 are employed as track-watch and station servants. It is, of course, a question of cheap labor. The track watchmen of the Bavarian state railway are receiving instructions that their wives are to attend to the work. The track watchman himself is to work on the road and his wife is to be on duty five hours every day, for which she receives the munificent wage of 9 pfennings, 2 $\frac{1}{2}$  per hour. If the wife cannot attend to the work, the watchman is to be transferred to another place and sometimes discharged.

#### MINE SAFETY DEMONSTRATION

Pittsburg, Aug. 19.—Thirty Thousand miners are expected to attend the great national mine safety demonstration to be held in this city Oct. 26-27, under the auspices of the Federal Bureau of Mines, American Red Cross, The Pittsburg Coal Operators Association and the United Mine Workers of America. The date originally set was Sept. 16, but has been changed to above dates in order that the President may be in attendance. This meeting is designed to give instruction in safety devices and methods applied to mining in order that the loss of life may be curtailed.



## ANOTHER NEW SCHEME

Denver, Aug. 19.—Hermann Maslin, a young German Socialist has come to this city to teach new economic reform, which he believes will result in the absorption of labor unions and all similar organizations. The organization is to be known as the Workers' Welfare League. Of course he is decidedly opposed to the present methods of conducting labor unions and will attempt to secure converts for his idealistic idealism. It is proposed in the formation of this new panacea to eliminate the charges for initiation and dues to a very great extent. He designates initiation fees and dues as "a tariff on being allowed to work and as rottenness in the unions."

## AGAINST FEDERATION

Chicago, Aug. 19.—The western railroad officials are outspoken in their opposition to the American Federation of Labor, which is back of the shop men's demands for increased wages on Harriman lines. One of the officials of the system Federation said, speaking for the classes of labor represented by the Federation: "They have received but a mere pittance of the advances granted to the engineers, conductors, trainmen and firemen, and they will resist any attempt to lower their wages either by direct cut or by sweating out under the guise of scientific management."

## CHILD LABOR CRUSADE

against

Cleveland, Aug. 19.—It is stated that a crusade against child labor in Cleveland will be started soon by Peter S. Curley, State Inspector of Factories and Workshops. Repeated violation of the labor law is said to be the cause of the movement. For several weeks Inspector Curley has been investigating conditions in the Cleveland factories. He says that warnings have been given to the factory owners and that now prosecutions will begin.

## LABOR LEGISLATION MEETING

New York, Aug. 19.—The American Association for Labor Legislation will hold a meeting in Chicago on Sept. 15-16, at which several important subjects of interest to liability underwriters will be discussed. The program provides, under the head of "Standardization for Accident Prevention," for papers on "Scientific Accident Prevention," by John Calder, formerly chief inspector of factories for Scotland; on "Industrial Insurance and Standards of Safety," by George Gilmour, formerly consulting engineer to the New York State Commission on Employers' Liability and Causes of Industrial Accidents, and on "Safety Standards Through State Inspection," by Edgar T. Davies, formerly member of the Illinois State Industrial Commission. John R. Commons, Louis D. Brandeis, and John B. Andrews will also read papers.

At Schenectady, the electrical workers have secured the union shop after a year's struggle.

At Troy, N. Y. the horseshoers obtained an increase of \$1.00 per week, without strike.



## WILL NOT SEEK RE-ELECTION

London, Aug. 19.—Mr. Ramsay MacDonald, M. P., has decided to relinquish the post of secretary to the Labor Party. This does not mean that he will relinquish his position in the parliamentary arena, but simply that he will not seek re-election as secretary at the annual conference of the Labor Party, which is to be held in Birmingham in January next. This party consists of trade unionists, members of the independent labor party, and is totally distinct from the parliamentary labor party. Pressure of work is given as the reason for not seeking re-election and beyond this it will be recollected that he will preside over the deliberations of the Indian National Congress in the Autumn. Nominations to fill the position will be invited from all the affiliated associations and final choice will be made at the conference in January next. Mr. MacDonald's assistant is Mr. Middleton, and it is thought he may be chosen for the position.

## ANOTHER SECRETARYSHIP

London, Aug. 19.—Owing to the death of W. C. Steadman, there is a vacancy for the secretaryship of the Parliamentary Committee of the Trade Union Congress. Mr. Bowerman, M. P., has been doing the work during Mr. Steadman's long illness and it is probable he will be elected to the position. No one will be allowed to fill the office except a trade union member actually working at his trade, or a permanent official of his union.

## PIT BROW GIRLS

London, Aug. 19.—For a number of years it has been the custom for women to work on the surface of coal mines and thereby add to the money earned by their husbands, or help support themselves. The proposal to abolish this system in the Southwest Lancashire coal fields, where some thousands of women employed in this kind of work, has created great indignation. The new Coal Mines Bill provides that no girls, or women, other than those employed on or before the first day of Jan. 1911, shall be permitted to be employed above ground on any mine, provided always that this section shall not apply to any woman who is engaged in the cleaning of colliery offices, or for any other like purpose. The women workers resent the passage of this law and a deputation of pit brow girls arrived in London recently to interview the home secretary, some of them donning their working costumes for the interview.

## FOREIGN NOTES

There is a shipping strike at the port of St. Petersburg, Russia, and it affects fifteen British cargo steamers.

If the tramways committee of the Black Pool Corporation do not accede to the employees' request for an adjustment of their grievances, there will probably be a strike.

During the Seamen's strike at Hull, the cost incurred by the Hull Corporation amounted to \$40,000.

An interesting feature of the annual meeting of the United Textile Factory Association, which was held at Bolton, was the presentation of a handsome tea and coffee service to D. J. Shackleton, now a labor adviser to the government.

New York, Aug. 19.--The Suspender Makers' Union has signed an agreement with its employers for one year and all demands have been granted without a strike. Most of the employers are using the union label and could not get along without it. The employees secured an increase in wages from 15 to 20 per cent and the employers agreed to observe union conditions. The men have also succeeded in abolishing the system of paying 50 cents per week for power.

#### BOX MAKERS WIN

New York, Aug. 19.--The Cigar Box Makers who were out on strike for the past two weeks have secured a settlement with J. Hefter and 500 men have returned to work, while some of the smaller manufacturers have also made settlements. The new agreement carries with it an increase of approximately \$2.00 a week.

#### PRESIDENT GOMPERS' WESTERN TRIP

Washington, Aug. 19.--President Gompers left on Thursday, Aug. 17 for his western trip, his first stop being at Denver, Colo., arriving there on Saturday afternoon at 1 p. m. and leaving for Salt Lake Monday morning at 8:30 a. m. The itinerary has heretofore been printed and all arrangements completed.

#### TO WAR ON BOOK TRUST

Columbus, Ohio., Aug. 19.--Members of the State School Book Commission met here recently and prepared for their contest with the school book trust, which is fighting to prevent the commission obtaining a big reduction in the price of school books. As formerly published, if a satisfactory price is not secured from the book trust, it is likely that the state will assume the function of printing the text books itself.

#### NEW YORK LABOR LEGISLATION

Albany, N. Y., Aug. 19.--A recent report from the State Federation of New York contains a list of bills enacted into law during the present session of the legislature. Twenty laws bearing on labor were passed by the Legislature and signed by the Governor.

#### JUNE IMMIGRATION

Washington, Aug. 19.--The report of the Bureau of Immigration and Naturalization for June has just been received. There were admitted during this month 71,019 immigrants, Southern Italy still contributing the largest number, 11,744, with the Polish second with 6,136, the Germans third with 5,228, the remainder being scattered between thirty-six different nationalities.

At Fitchburg, Mass. carpenters secured an increase from \$3.28 to \$3.50 per day.

At Three Rivers, Mich. the unions have all secured an increase and reduced working hours from 10 to 9 per day.